OHIO COMMON SCHOOL DIRECTOR.

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CONDUCTED BY SAMUEL LEWIS, SUPERINTENDENT OF COMMON SCHOOLS.

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TO AUDITORS AND SUBSCRIBERS.

I have received several letters, complaining that the Director does not reach the subscribers, and that the Auditors do not receive a sufficient number for the school districts. In answer to all these we say, that the packing and directing is done by the State Printer, or a careful hand by his directions. Each county has a number forwarded, equal to the number of townships and districts, as returned to the Superintendant in 1837, and five added for other officers. Subscribers have their papers forwarded, also, according to the orders.

We have no doubt but all orders for counties and subscribers, are filled at the printing office. That mistakes are made somewhere is evident, but we are not blameable, nor is the State Printer.

It cannot be necessary, now that only two numbers more are to be published, to change the direction. It has been done heretofore on every request; but Auditors had better receive and distribute the remaining papers, as heretofore.

SCHOOL REPORTS.

Calls are made for additional numbers of the Reports of the Superintendent, and of Mr. Stowe. We regret to say, that these documents are all distributed; and those who esteem them, should preserve them carefully, for it is not probable that more will be printed.

TO SCHOOL OFFICERS.

You all have a right to the perusal of this paper;—it is provided for the district, and while it should be preserved with the papers of each district, it should be read by every officer, and if requested, by every voter in the district. It is wrong for any one officer to claim it as his own; it is intended as information for all, and all should read, who wish either to favor or hinder the operation of the Common School System.

In too many cases, the Director has been used as a common newspaper; and when for the transaction of business, it is desirable to refer to this document, it is lost or mislaid. Its uses are then seen, the want of it felt, and every mail brings letters requesting additional numbers to those places where a supply has already been furnished. We shall continue to supply, to the extent of the authority given us, with the request, that they shall be used and preserved according to law.

Many subjects crowd themselves upon our attention for this fifth number. Since the last was sent out, a travel through forty counties in the south, west, east, north, and middle of the State, has enabled us to see how the cause of Common Shools flourishes.

To avoid mistake on this subject, we have spent much time in conversing with County Auditors, School Examiners, Township Clerks, and other school officers. We have visited schools in sixty-five counties since the enactment of the present law in March last; and improved every opportunity to collect information from private individuals, as well as public officers. A great many questions are asked, and universal anxiety exists to have good schools, and children well educated.

In a community like ours, made up of people from every state in the Union, as well as from several European States, it is no easy matter to frame a school system that will be perfectly satisfactory to all, or even to a majority. It is not even easy to induce every one to read, and make up an opinion deliberately on the subject. While

all other laws have officers appointed to execute them, the school law depends for its active influence, entirely on the people in their primary assemblies. It is the only general law that is carried into effect on the pure principles of democracy: and because it differs so widely from all others, it is more difficult to bring it into general operation.

When the law has been in force long enough to make the people generally acquainted with its provisions, and when the system has got fairly into use, the whole difficulty will vanish; every man will be ready to perform the duties of a school officer; every district will have a good school, and every child will be well educated.

We are satisfied that nine out of ten are friendly to the system, and this number of the Director will be devoted to such explanations, as have been called for from different parts of the State.

Township Clerks' duty in appointing Directors.

Whatever doubt existed heretofore, as to your duty in appointing Directors, none can be entertained now, that the day for the annual school elections is passed. The township clerk has the following duties, among others, to perform:

He should immediately see whether Directors have been elected and sworn, in all the school districts.

If any districts have failed to elect, or if those elected refuse to qualify as required by law, the township clerk should immediately appoint three men for Directors, in any and every such district. In selecting men for this purpose, great caution should be used; no man of doubtful friendship for the schools should be appointed. It is the men in these humble, though important offices, that are in fact giving the whole direction to our interests, our government, and our character. It will be *less* important, who may fill (what are called) the higher offices in government. They will only follow the lead of public sentiment, or of what they suppose it to be. How important then is it, that this influence shall be of the very best and most enlightened character.

It is generally desirable that the Directors should be heads of families, whose children will attend the common schools. No man should be a school director or trustee, who refuses or neglects to send his own children to public schools. If these schools are not good enough for his children, they are not good enough for the poorest child in the land; and it is his duty to see that the schools are made what they ought to be. But if the officers, appointed by the township clerk, do not accept and qualify, then it becomes his duty to go into the district, and perform the duties of the directors.

He should immediately give notice, and call a meeting of the householders of the district; inform them at the meeting what the law is, and recommend such measures as he thinks the interests of the schools require.

He should, in this part of his duty, act as far as possible according to the wishes of a majority of the district. He must see that the school house is put in order, that seats and fuel are prepared, and a good teacher employed, to commence the winter school as early as possible. There will be public money in nearly all the districts, sufficient to defray the expense for four months; this will be payable about New Year, and a teacher can be employed to commence in November, and receive a part of his money in January.

In conclusion, let us say that on township clerks, more than any other officers, the cause of universal education now in this State depends; and they cannot forget their duty to their country, and the obligations of their oaths, so far as to omit entirely, or carelessly to perform, any of these important measures.

READ THE SCHOOL LAW.

In visiting different counties it is not uncommon to find individuals, both officers and those in private life, who ask for information on points clearly provided by the school law; and when the law is read, some of these persons frankly admit that they have never read the law. One officer complained sorely of certain provisions that the law contained, as very unpopular; and when requested to point them out, after searching some time unsuccessfully, admitted that it was in a newspaper he had read what the law was; and taking that for true, had not examined the law for himself.

We say respectfully to *County Auditors and Township Clerks*, read the school law carefully; and to Directors we recommend the same course. Let no officer take offence at this article; a majority of the auditors and other officers, do read and understand, and faithfully labor to execute it;—but some do not read, or if they do, they do not take time to examine all its parts, and study how they can most successfully carry

it into effect. We add, that almost all the doubtful questions will be found explained in the Director; and if the law and the different numbers of the Director are carefully read, none can be at a loss how to proceed in compliance with the law.

WHAT IS THE NECESSITY OF A SCHOOL LAW?

Why cannot every man be left to manage the subject of schools as he sees proper, without all this form!—is a question often asked by those unaccustomed to school business! We answer, by asking another question. What is the necessity of a law regulating roads!—why not leave every man at liberty to work on the road, and contribute towards working roads or not, when and where they please! There are, we know, a few men whose road tax is heavy, who complain of it, because they cannot see how their property is to be directly benefitted. This number, however, is small; the great body of the people know that good roads are indispensable to the prosperity of a country, and it is equally well understood that there must be a law creating sundry officers, dividing the township into road districts, and directing the disbursement of the money and labor for each.

Now it is found by experience, that schools can no more be provided for all the people without a legal system, than roads can be so provided; and schools depending for their support on individual effort, bear about the same proportion to the wants of the country, as roads would on the same plan; some would be very good, some only tolerable; while by far the greater part would be useless. To secure any thing like the proper advantage for the amount of money expended, if that sum be ever so small, there must be system; and *if this is indispensable*, it will be found, that the present law does not require a single act on the part of the people or officers, that could be omitted without impairing its efficacy.

THE SCHOOL LAW IS SO MUCH TROUBLE.

And pray, what is done without labor! Does your corn grow without it, or does your dwelling house with all its conveniences, grow up without labor and expense! And shall we expect that education (which is more valuable to individuals and nations than any thing of a pecuniary kind,) will come and diffuse her blessings and treasures into the hearts of all our children, without some trouble! It is not even desirable, if it were practicable.

Take our main canals, and suppose an individual or an association had furnished all the funds, and constructed the works free of charge, and presented the whole to the State; would the State have been more wealthy and prosperous with the works thus furnished, and without the debt, than she is with them constructed as they have been by the united action of the people, and with the debt which we owe therefor! Has not the part which the people have been compelled to take, in order to make up their opinions, and decide on the various questions of policy presented to them at the annual elections, induced a general investigation; and its result, a general diffusion of knowledge and enterprize among us all, that is more valuable than the works themselves,—for the plain reason, that with our present knowledge and energy of character, if we were without canals we would soon have them; and having them, we have acquired faculties that make us, as a people, capable of doing almost any thing for the advancement of our happiness and glory.

Now, for the same reason, we would not, if we could, have our schools established on any plan that fails to require from the people, at least so much action as will make every man acquainted with all the parts of the work, as well as the principles on which it is predicated. In this way, we that are parents will acquire advantages but little, if any less, than the children for whose direct benefit the school system is established.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE WHERE THERE IS NO SCHOOL-HOUSE, AND THE PEOPLE REFUSE TO BUILD?

This is a case not provided for by law, and there is some difficulty. The law directs that the school money shall only be paid out to the teachers for tuition. There seems to be no express authority, to levy a tax for school house rent. Ample power is given to build school houses, and it is the policy of the law to induce the people to build as fast as possible. Still there may be cases, where it is not expedient to build immediately; and in such places, the individuals interested can voluntarily pay the small sum required to rent a room.

Some districts have adopted a plan which, though it is not sustained by the law, may possibly be excused in extreme cases; it is to employ the teacher at so much, he find-

ing a room. Officers must, if possible, give such a construction to the whole law, as will secure the end proposed: which is a good school in every district, sufficient for the education of every child in it.

HOW SHALL WE RAISE MONEY TO BUILD SCHOOL HOUSES?

If we had commenced building when our situation first required it, our school houses would have increased with our population; but this is not the case. Many towns, with from 100 to 3000 children, have no common school house; and there is danger in attempting to raise by direct tax, the amount required for this purpose. It will do perhaps in districts, where but one room is required; but the policy is doubtful in towns where several rooms are to be furnished.

To supply this want we have proposed, and shall again recommend, that the State contract a loan to whatever extent may be required for a school house fund; to be lent in turn to such towns and districts as may request it, under such limitations as may be provided. Thus, the State can borrow, say at five per cent.; let a town or district, by a vote of the people, contract with the State for a sum sufficient to build one or more school houses, as the place may require; let the State lend to such town or district at the same rate that is paid for the loan; then let the interest on that sum be annually charged as tax to the property of such town or district, and collected and paid over to the State Treasury, as other state taxes are collected; let the principal be paid the same way in ten, fifteen and twenty years, or such other times as may be thought best. This will be no expense, and will secure the object. What objections can be urged against this plan?

COMPLAINTS ABOUT TEACHERS.

How shall we get good teachers? is a question that has been asked us, more than a thousand times.

It is true, that a vast number of teachers do not pretend to teach all, or half the branches that should be taught in the common school.

Reading

Is attempted to be taught by all the teachers; but it is a fact admitted by all men of learning, that a knowledge of English Grammar; in other words, a knowledge of the principles on which our language is formed and used, is indispensable to the man or woman, who would teach reading well. The youth when properly taught, is or should be learning the principles of grammar; from the time the first lesson in a, b, c, is given, until its studies, in all the different branches taught in the English language, are completed. More than one half of the money paid teachers who do not understand the principles of the language, is worse than thrown away; the youth frequently acquires a bad habit, that acts as a dead weight in all the after progress in study.

Writing.

This branch is more mechanical than any other. Few teachers have heretofore been employed, who could not teach it in some way. But here, too, a bad habit may be fixed, that will be worse than to know nothing. We have looked over a dozen copy books, in one school, where one teacher wrote all the copies, and found the letters made in no two copies alike; and this, too, for young beginners. We have shown the teacher single letters written by themselves, for copies, which they could not name without seeing the whole word, to find what the copy ought to be.

Directors and parents should give more attention to this branch. If the teacher will set the copies, see to it that they are all uniform, and every letter made so plain that it could be told standing alone. A fancy hand-writing may be adopted afterward, to suit the taste of each individual; but the learner should practice on a plain substantial hand, and if it is intended that the children shall improve, the teacher should give his whole attention to the writing class, while they are practising. To put a class of children to writing, while the teacher hears a reading, or some other class, is worse than doing nothing. A good writer has a good trade, and can always get business.

Arithmetic,

Has not been taught in many schools, from the false idea, that a teacher who knows little, will do to teach children who know little; thereby making it certain, that they will never know much.

Hereafter, some knowledge of arithmetic is indispensable for every teacher of common schools; but to what extent that knowledge shall reach, is not determined. Some examiners require it as far as vulgar fractions, while others give certificates of short periods, to those who can barely stand an examination in the four simple rules.

It is true, that in many schools, the higher parts of arithmetic are not yet required to

be taught. It is equally true, however, that a person must understand the higher branches before he can, in a thorough and proper manner, teach the lower branches; and the sooner public sentiment will justify such a requisition by the examiners, the better. Here, as in other studies, it will be a serious injury to a youth, if he receives his first impressions of the science or principles of arithmetic, from a teacher whose contracted knowledge has never much exceeded a mechanical combination of figures. The teacher should not only understand the rule, but be able to explain the principles on which it is founded. Arithmetic is not taught to one fifth of those in school, whose age and circumstances make this study proper for them. It is not uncommon to find a school containing fifty scholars, of whom more than one half are above nine years of age, and yet not more than two or three are studying arithmetic. This is not as it should be; children of seven or eight years of age are fully able to commence the study of intellectual arithmetic, even should they read imperfectly. It accustoms them to think, to reflect, and to concentrate their attention: and so improves and invigorates their minds, that they will progress much faster in their other studies, even though one third of their time should be devoted to arithmetic. When we speak of intellectual arithmetic, or mental arithmetic as it is sometimes called, we mean that in which all the operations are performed in the mind;—the child needs no slate or pencil; he has no rules to commit to memory. The works on this branch of arithmetic are written in such a manner, that the learner is almost his own teacher. No preliminary knowledge is required, except to read and be able to count his fingers; but the knowledge gained in a short time is almost always so great, as to astonish those who are not already familiar with the acquirements which young learners are capable of making.

It is not our design, in any instance, to recommend particular works as school books. On the subject of arithmetics, however, we would emphatically say, that only those ought to be used, that teach the reason of the rules and the principles on which they are founded. That scholar can only be regarded as a good one, who knows how to do a thing, with the reason why he does it.

Geography,

Should be taught in our schools. Our children will, to some extent, be a travelling people as their fathers have been; and while we would discourage any practice going to tax the child with the labor and time required, to commit the great amount of matter contained in most of our modern books on this subject to memory—because much of it is of no practical use, and much is constantly changing, so that facts in detail that may be true to-day will not be true of the same places five years hence—we still insist that all should understand the general principles of this science, the *general* divisions of the earth, both natural and civil, and have a particular knowledge of our own country. This cannot be taught well, unless the teacher is familiar with it. With a good map in the room, a well qualified teacher will be able to give all his scholars a tolerable knowledge of this subject, on general principles. No scholar should be put to the study of geography from books, until the teacher has given him this general impression.

The History of the United States, General History, the Elements of Chemistry and Natural Philosophy, &c., should be understood by every one who undertakes to teach, whether there are scholars prepared to study them or not, for this (if no other) sufficient reason, viz: That there are but few persons whose minds can be sufficiently disciplined to become teachers, without a course of study comprehending, at least, all we have named. But there is another reason why the teacher should be thus qualified. It is this: These branches of learning can only be placed within the reach of the children of the farmer, mechanic and laborer, by means of the common school; inasmuch as nine out of ten are so situated, that they cannot get to any other school unless they leave home, which is too expensive to be borne by the great majority; and independent of the expense, is so often attended with evil consequences, that it should be avoided as far as possible. To say that all, or any of these branches should be shut out of the common schools, would be to say that they should be monopolized by the few who are sufficiently wealthy to send their children from home, to private academies or colleges—leaving four-fifths of the whole population with inferior learning, and establishing the principle, that the schools for the great majority may be inferior to those for the smaller number.

If the people, in this free and enlightened country, will yield to and sanction this principle, we shall certainly—however unwillingly—acquiesce in their decision. But to them the subject is referred—they have the control of it. In conclusion we say: Fellow citizens, look to your rights, and the rights of your children.

HOW TO GET GOOD TEACHERS.

If the teacher for the Common Schools must be qualified to teach all that we have named, it follows that he must be a man of good natural talents, a well educated man, at least in all the branches that go to make up a good English education; and particularly should he understand mental philosophy, or the science of mind. He should be able to teach with or without books, and detect the error of the pupil if the teacher himself should lose the place. He should be able to examine the class by asking questions in his own language, and requiring the pupils to put the answer in language of their own; thereby teaching the principle rather than the words of the lesson.

BUT TO THE POINT.

How shall such teachers be found?

First, determine whether you want a male or female teacher. If you have children enough for two schools in your district, class them so as to send the younger portion to female teachers. Females are naturally better adapted to teaching and governing small children than males, and as a general rule, throughout the whole State, the females are better qualified, by proper education, than males. In that part of the State where females do the most teaching, their wages, (right or wrong) are but little more than half what is paid to males, and just as soon, as it is known that educated females can get steady business as teachers at a fair price, they will be qualified and ready to take the schools. It is a work better adapted to their taste and their relations in life, than the manufactory and some other employments, where our females are now compelled to earn a scanty support by drudgery wholly inconsistent with their sex.

IF GOOD MALE TEACHERS

Are wanted, qualified as aforesaid, the directors must first determine what branches shall be taught, and then seek out a teacher whose certificate bears evidence of his attainments; nor should the certificate be conclusive—the directors should be personally satisfied of his competency, or not employ him.

We should never urge a certificate for a poor teacher for our children. Are not our children as good as other children? We should strive for the best in the country—and if we think we are not the best judges, get the examiners or some others to help us make the selection.

BUT SUCH A MAN MUST HAVE A HIGH SALARY.

Here it comes at last. We cannot get good teachers, because we will not pay a fair, or (if you please) a high price. Land has risen; wages for all kinds of labor have risen; produce of all kinds has risen; the demand for well educated men in every other department has risen,—but the schoolmaster's salary, the salary of the man whose mind and labor has more to do with the weal or woe of the country, than any other class or profession, is to be stationary; and if we cannot get a teacher well qualified for a low price, we will not have any; or what is as bad, and sometimes worse, we will have a teacher to fit our price, let the consequence be what it may. Now, the fact is, our teachers are already *too good* for our use, or too good for the market. Let but a fair

COMPENSATION

be offered, with assurance of constant business; and there will, in a very short time, be a supply of male and female teachers. We therefore say, in conclusion of this long article,—whatever else may be required, a fair salary is indispensable, if you want a good teacher.

IT IS ECONOMICAL,

Because, by having at least half the work done by females, there will be something saved to make up what is required to pay the male a fair price. If the amount of learning acquired is to be taken into account, it will be found that the youth under good teachers will learn more in one year, than in five under poor teachers; and for the money paid, our children may as well be good English scholars at twelve, as to be ignorant or only half learned. If the man who sells us corn by measure, were to cut it short a half or three-fourths, we should think him dishonest; but we frequently contract for a quarter's schooling, when in fact, we do not get one-fourth of what we pay for. This is as much lost by the old plan.

HOW MANY SCHOLARS SHALL BE ALLOWED EACH TEACHER.

This depends on what kind of a school you want. If you wish a good school, you must have a less number,—say from 25 to 40 at most; and in proportion as you are willing to reduce the advantage of the school, you will increase the number of the scholars, until it reaches 60 or upwards, and then it is generally worse than no school; for though something may be learn-

ed even in such a school, still there is enough bad habit and conduct acquired, to more than balance all the good.

There is no greater evil than crowded common schools; and no idea more fallacious, than that we are gaining a good bargain by hiring a teacher, who will undertake to teach a large number for a small sum. Whatever teachers may say to secure employment, cannot alter the fact, nor enable men to go beyond a certain point. They have but a certain number of hours per day, and in schools made up of all classes from a, b, c, to algebra, one teacher cannot do justice to more than thirty; and his school would be better with only twenty-five. With his school well classed, as it can be where there are several in the same district, the number may go up to forty; as there will be a gain of one-third, in a proper arrangement of the classes.

TEACHERS

Should speak their minds freely on this subject. They know that they only consent to have crowded schools, because the price given depends on the number; and for teaching a small number, they cannot support themselves. There are not ten good teachers in the State but what will admit, that they could teach 25 or 30 better than 40 or 50, if the price for the smaller number was equal to that paid for the larger.

AT WHAT AGE SHALL CHILDREN BE ADMITTED TO SCHOOL.

Not less than four years, nor over twenty years, is clearly the spirit of the law; and directors should observe this rule.—To allow any to attend under four years, will greatly injure the school, violate the law, and do such scholars no good.

ONE GREAT HINDRANCE TO GOOD SCHOOLS,

Is the influence of poor teachers. This is said with all good feeling and respect for those who are not poor teachers; and to prevent mistake, we say, that there are now a great number of both male and female teachers in our common schools, that are good teachers and deserve encouragement. Such are always found in favor of elevating the standard of schools, and hail with patriotic joy the prospect of brighter days. But after this, it must also be said, that there are a number whose qualifications are below the required standard, which they see is still rising; and who have not the industry and mental ability to advance with the spirit of the times.—These persons tremble lest the profession should grow out of their reach, and leave them to seek a subsistence by labor, or otherwise. They accordingly exert all their influence to hinder the progress of education. Parents and officers should not follow the advice of these persons, without great caution. Those who would advise us to be content with giving our children a poor education, should be looked upon in the same light with him, who would advise us to permit our children to enjoy only half the privileges of freemen, instead of full privileges; or to allow them but half as much food as their appetites and health required. Always remember, that the coarser the wares of the dishonest pedlar, the louder and more earnestly will he insist on their superiority; and even wooden nutmegs found an advocate in him who wished to profit by the sale. An honest teacher will let his works recommend him, as the honest trader would his goods. Never stint the salary of a good teacher; and for a poor one, the smallest sum is too much to pay.

HOW SHALL TEACHING BE MADE A PROFESSION?

We shall understand this question, by noticing how other professions are sustained; it is by the members of each.

Medical men are recognized as a distinct body of men, having acquirements peculiar to their own department; so with the attorneys, and with the clergy; and by certain rules adopted by themselves, some kind of examination or test of qualification is fixed, by which the candidate is to be tried before admission into either of the professions. These professions, by securing this organization, command the respect and confidence of the people; and though there may be some unworthy members, and some whose oddities or peculiarities, enable them to get along for a while on their own strength; still, as a general rule, the world is governed in its opinions of men in all the professions, by the standard fixed for each, by the members of his respective profession.

Let teachers follow the example, organize in every county, and prepare for a

STATE SOCIETY OF TEACHERS.

Do not admit every applicant to membership—have some standard fixed, such as circumstances will now justify, and raise it as fast as possible. Take measures to spread proper information before the community. Do not shun the responsibility of exposing the hollow pretensions of the unworthy.—good private as well as public

teachers, should make common cause.—You have but to fix the standard, and public observation will soon detect those who fall below it. Begin with

COUNTY SOCIETIES,

And your county Examiners are the men to take the lead; their quarterly or monthly examinations are fit, in every respect, for these county meetings. Here would be assembled the old teachers of character, who would, by invitation, assist in examining the younger. Here the student might see the practical uses of his studies; subjects of improvement would be discussed, doubtful points be solved, and unity of action be secured. The talents of teachers could be seen; and both parents and directors would soon learn the advantage of attending the examinations and discussions, as the best place to select a good teacher.

A STATE SOCIETY

Has been formed; two meetings have been held, and a third will take place in the latter part of December next at Columbus. Let every county send one or more delegates, prepared to adopt the most vigorous measures for protecting the great interest of the people by fixing the true distinction, so that it can be seen between the qualified teacher and his opposite. Finally; let teachers themselves take up the subject, to them after all, we look, and we have some hope that this arrangement will be made in every county in a short time; the day that shall witness a perfect organization of the teachers from every county will, in point of importance, go far beyond any previous organization since the adoption of our excellent institution.

Will *County Examiners* take an interest in this subject!

But, are female teachers to become permanent in their profession! is a question frequently asked, as if it formed a serious objection either to their employment or to the professional character. We answer, that females cannot, as a general rule, be relied on to continue in the business after they settle in life, and this is the only good reason that can be assigned for putting their wages below the male teacher. Many of them, however, continue teaching successfully through life, and sufficient encouragement should be given to induce well educated females to seek it as an honorable and profitable employment.

One thing is worthy of observation, viz: the young female is better prepared by disposition and habit than the other sex, to take charge of children. She has a natural fondness for children, a patient forbearance for their follies, a knowledge of their tempers and motives to action, a gentleness and kindness in all her conduct toward them that secures their confidence and love more readily than the other sex. These are most important qualities, that have to be acquired by men after they commence their labor, while ladies are generally so situated in early life as to possess them, in a very great degree, before they assume the character of teachers.

ALTERING SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

This is a subject fruitful of complaint. Formerly the difficulty was, that the Trustees were changing the lines so often, as to keep the school business in great confusion. The Trustees were required to complete the districting of their townships, and furnish a plat to the County Auditors by July last. In doing this it was impossible to please all. The Trustees could have no motive intentionally to do wrong, and if an error of judgment has occasionally been committed, it is not strange. We should, however, be careful how we bestow censure on Trustees for discharging what, after all, must have been a most difficult duty.

SMALL DISTRICTS.

We can see no good reason why, in a well settled township, a district should be made so small that a house cannot be built, nor a school kept up; better try to have the district large enough for two schools, than to reduce them so small. Directors and trustees should examine carefully the different complaints that are made, and be prepared to make such alterations as convenience requires at the annual Trustee meeting in March next.

We hope that very few alterations of district lines will be made hereafter, as it frequently operates hard upon those who live on the outer lines, by compelling them to pay for a school house, and then setting them off to another district where a new house has to be built; and so on, until they have to contribute to several different houses, before they can enjoy the privilege of one. We know, that in a country filling up as fast as ours is, there will be difficulties; but we should make them as light as possible, and the fewer alterations we make, the better. As a general rule, avoid small districts.

UNION DISTRICTS.

These have been very troublesome in all proceedings, and they frequently operate the greatest injustice. A district is composed of two or more townships; the school

fund in one is large enough to pay two dollars per scholar, while in the other it only pays fifty cents per scholar.

For a variety of reasons, it is always desirable to keep the school districts complete in one township. Where union districts are formed and houses built, of course they should be continued, until some other satisfactory arrangement is made.

PLAN OF SCHOOL HOUSES.

More of these are building this year, than in any four years before; and we are constantly asked for a plan. We have procured several plans from different places, but none that we can recommend for general use. There are some general rules, that must be regarded in building school houses. They must be large enough for the number of scholars in the district. If there be but 30 or 40 scholars to provide for, the house can be in the form furnished in a former number, or on any other plan to suit the taste of the people in the district. If more than one teacher is to be in one room, (and there should always be more where the scholars exceed 40,) the addition to the room should be in length, so as to place the teachers as far apart as possible; though it is always preferable to place each teacher in a different room.

LIGHT.

There should be light *enough*. Many children have had their sight injured, by being compelled to fix the eye steadily on the small characters of which the lesson is composed. Dr. Reynolds, an eminent physician, says: "How much talent lies dormant by the morbidly sensitive eyesight, occasioned by the inordinate and untimely use of the eyes! This last mentioned evil, is increasing to a fearful amount among the young. Accurate inquiries have convinced me, that a large number of these individuals must go back to the school room to find the source of their infirmities."

MISCELLANEOUS SUBJECTS.

We are often asked, who shall collect *school bills*? By reference to the law, it will be seen, that the old mode of supporting schools by individuals, is not provided for. Provision is made, that if the public funds are not enough to support the school as long as the people wish, then an additional sum can be raised from the *property* of the township, and *not* from individuals. The directors, to be sure, have power to adopt such regulations as they think best; but the law seeks to encourage *free schools*, and discourage any mode of expending the public funds, that will impose conditions on the attendance of the scholars that cannot be complied with by all. When the public schools are closed, the houses should of course be open for private schools, and the teacher can collect his own bills.

A KITCHEN SCHOOL.

The directors in one county town informed me, that two schools could not be kept in the same house, for they had tried it; the children would dispute and create disorder. On enquiry it was found, that they had one private school of a *better* grade, and a *partly* common school, in different rooms; the better room was well fitted, the common room was poorly finished and still more poorly furnished: it was a room set by the side of the main building. Each school answered exactly the intended purpose; those who were able to pay a fair price sent to the high school,—and the others to the *low* school:—a feeling of superiority was cherished which soon exhibited itself, and the youths in the low school were called the *kitchen* scholars, by way of ridicule, because they could not go to the best school. So will it ever be, if the public and private school is at all united. Let the *private school* flourish, let the number increase, and help to raise their character; but however perfect they become, make the common school—the school for all the people—fully as good, and a *little* better; and then we shall have no kitchen school houses or kitchen scholars.

We are asked for the best plan to construct a meeting house, so as to allow the basement story for a common school room. Several churches wish to build in that way, by the help of the district. We answer, if you must have a basement story for a school, put it up stairs, and let the meeting house be the lower room. This is said in no disrespect for churches; but as children will be confined to the room about thirty hours, and those attending church but from three to six hours in the week, it is but reasonable that schools should have the most airy and pleasant room. We are satisfied, that basement school rooms have been the death of some of the most promising scholars.—One of the most amiable and useful teachers we ever knew, was hurried (we always believed) to his grave, by exposure as a teacher in a basement story.

FREE SCHOOLS.

Will school officers and parents recollect

that the common schools are to be *free!* A school common to all who can pay, is not a common school:—some can't pay, and some won't pay. The school is for the children, and not for the parents; and our Constitution says, "That no law shall prevent the poor in the several counties and townships in this State, from an equal participation in the schools * * * * * which are endowed in whole, or in part, from the revenue arising from donations of the United States for the support of schools," &c.

ESTIMATE FOR ADDITIONAL SCHOOL FUND.

We shall devote a chapter of advice to Township Clerks on this subject, in our next number.

THE DISTRICT CLERK,

In union districts, should make his annual reports to the clerk of the township in which the school house is located, or school kept.

COUNTY AUDITORS

Should receive fines, appropriated for school purposes to the county.

Township Treasurers should collect all fines to be appropriated to their particular townships.

SCHOOL LIBRARIES.

Every body speaks and writes in favor of these; but we look in vain for that popular action, which is required for the developement of public sentiment. It is not too late, if the friends will take hold of the subject.

SCHOOL PROPERTY.

Township Clerks and Auditors are requested to notice that part of the law, which requires a report of all lands and money given for school purposes. What is everybody's business, has been nobody's business; and the result is, that great wrongs have been perpe rated by those who ought to take care of property given for this purpose. Large tracts of land, valuable town lots and buildings, and immense sums of money have been lost to the cause of education for want of supervision. The law if enforced, will in future correct this evil.

COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS.

There is fear, that some Auditors do not see the importance of the duties devolving upon them, in this particular. One Auditor has been found, and lectured in every township in his county, on the importance of schools and school houses. He is a large land holder, and has no children. He always urges the building of good school houses, and pays his tax most freely. His example and influence is doing more in his county, than all the laws that could be enacted. He feels himself at the head of the school system in his county, and responsible to a great degree for its success. Such men deserve, and will receive, the thanks of a grateful public.

SCHOOL HOUSES IN COUNTY SEATS.

With most respectful deference we ask, why it is, that in county seats the schools are less provided for than in the country districts, generally? It cannot be that the accumulation of wealth is unfriendly to common schools. Is it possible that the various subjects of an exciting nature, so often presented, keep this subject from receiving its due weight! Be it what it may, it is worthy of reflection, and at the several seats of justice, examples should be set fit to be followed every where.

We have frequently alluded to the distribution of school money, where districts have been altered in number and size after the apportionment. The law is plain: the officer holding the fund, should pay it out to those for whom it was intended, by whatever name they may be known. If there are three districts where there were but one, divide the money that was for the one among the three, in proportion to the number of scholars in each, as near as can be. Exact accuracy cannot be expected, but there should be no delay.

TO FARMERS.

The following, taken from the Cincinnati Gazette, is worthy of reflection. Say what we please, it is useless to conceal the fact, that our agricultural interests are not protected and promoted as they ought to be; and the only way to remedy the evil is, by educating every farmer's son and daughter in the land.

"I can assure the Editor, that the perusal of the remarks of Solon Robinson, on the subject of elevating the condition of the agricultural class, gave me deep and sincere gratification. I have reflected some on this subject myself; and long ere this, was fully impressed with the belief that something ought to be done, and that too,

speedily, resolutely and perseveringly. The pursuit of agriculture is viewed by many with contempt; especially by *the gifted*, or those who presume they are gifted; viewing it as not conducting them to any goal where Honor, with her emblazonries, stands open-armed to embrace them. Surely it is men whom their Creator has blessed with talents, that the science of agriculture needs, in order to enrich it by their discoveries, and sustain it by their industry and example. Almost all other branches of productive industry, have received more aid from the rich storehouse of Genius than this; and as agriculture is the grand fulcrum and palladium of all other branches of industry, let us invoke for her that attention which her important character demands; let us conjure the parent and the son, each to view her and contemplate her profoundly, and surely they cannot fail to see that she holds in her hands, ready to bestow upon her votaries, happiness, health, virtue and honor. CINCINNATUS.

GOOD MORALS.

The establishment of schools of an improved character, is, we think, one of the most direct and efficient means of improving the moral condition of society. They should, however, be established on a rational, correct, and solid basis—conducted by instructors who contemplate the gradual and harmonious development and invigoration of all the powers and faculties of the pupils, and who regard education, as a course of preparation, not only for the intelligent discharge of the duties of this stage of progress, but likewise of those pertaining to a higher and nobler period of interminable advancement. Conducted in the true spirit of Christian sympathy, schools of this character would exert an amazing influence upon society. They would be associated in the minds of the community, with objects of the highest intellectual and moral grandeur. [*Dissemin*ator.

ERRORS IN EDUCATION.

We do not endorse the sentiment contained in the following article, but it has a name attached to it that gives it weight; the name of one who has trod the whole length of the road, and sounded well the depths and shoals of learning, both in Europe and America. If such errors do exist, we should correct them; it is not a necessary consequence of learning. No lesson need ever be given, and should never be given, unless calculated in some way to make the learner more capable of using all the powers of body and mind, for the promotion of individual and social happiness.

Industry is a lesson inseparable from sound education. Economy, or a knowledge of the true value of time and money, should be taught in every school, both in theory and practice. We deprecate the narrow feeling that supposes nothing in learning valuable, that is not directly available for practical use in making money; but we do not the less deprecate any mode of education, that unfits the scholar for active business. Every student, as he progresses from the lowest to the very highest departments of learning, should be taught, as far as possible, the principles, by which all that is acquired may be made useful in the various departments of life. Where this is neglected, learning is, to say the least, defective, if not worthless.

WHAT IS USEFUL EDUCATION?

We put the question in reference to the great body of American youth, who are to earn their bread by the sweat of their brows, and, under Providence, to wield the future destinies of our country. Two principles should be aimed at—*To provide for themselves honorably*, under any ordinary contingencies—*and qualify them to become useful to society*. The times, as well as universal experience, abundantly admonish us that, however the children of wealth may indulge in indolence and dissipation, while their means last,—the great mass of American youth must, and ought, to depend upon their labor for their fortunes and their usefulness. Fortune is at best precarious—patrimonial dependence is uncertain, and reliance upon the friendship or charity of the world, or upon office, is frail and often debasing. Self-dependence is the only sure stay. *We are ever most willing to help those who help themselves.* Productive labor is the legitimate source of all the wealth, individual and national—and this labor is profitable to the individual and to the nation, *in proportion to the measure of intelligence and scientific knowledge which guides and directs its operations.* Hence it is of primary importance, that our youth should be efficiently taught to labor, and that their minds should be early imbued with that kind of knowledge which will instruct them in the principles of their business, render it honorable, and make them independent in conduct and in fortune.

We have, to be sure, colleges and academies, more than can well be supported or than can be made economical and useful.

But these are in a measure consecrated to the learned professions—to the privileged few—for they are privileged, inasmuch as they are the exclusive recipients of public bounty in the higher branches of learning. Productive labor derives little or no advantage from their teaching. Few of the youth who enter their halls, ever seek for a livelihood in the laboring arts. They learn to look upon labor as servile and demeaning, and to seek their living in what they consider the higher classes of society. They do not go to these schools to learn to work, or to learn to live by work—in the common meaning of these terms—but to learn to live without work or above work. They are virtually withdrawn from the producing classes. These young aspirants flock to the learned professions, and the genteel employments, as the avenues to honors and office; and notwithstanding the laborer is taxed heavily, in one way or another, to supply their real or imaginary wants, yet the genteel professions have become overstocked, and the threshold of power so thronged with applicants, that hundreds and thousands are thrown back, as parasites upon society, exhibiting the melancholy spectacles of men, born to be useful, but unable or unwilling, from the bias of a wrong education, to become so.—Let the standard of education be raised.—EVERETT.

SCHOOL HOUSES AGAIN.

We have, since writing the former pages of this number, received many letters—they reach us every mail, calling for a plan for school houses: we will, if possible, have some plans prepared and forwarded with all practicable haste. In the mean time let me say, that if the report of the Secretary of the Board of Education, on the subject of school houses for the State of Massachusetts, can be obtained, it will furnish the best information of any document I know of. I will try to get it, in part at least, published in some of the newspapers. It refers more particularly to village school houses, but the general principles are applicable every where.

County towns have resolved to take the true course to place common schools at the head of education in the State, by building houses large enough for from four to eight teachers, so as to class all the youth and studies in the best manner.

One word on this subject. Be sure that you have the best plan, before you build; get your lot, your money, your *materials*, &c. But better rent rooms a few weeks longer, than to make a mistake in the plan of buildings that are to stand for future ages, monuments of the wisdom and enterprise of the present age.

Miscellaneous articles from the Common School Assistant.

A COMMON EXCUSE.

When I have asked individuals to make some personal effort for the improvement of Common Schools, it has not unfrequently been said:

"Why do you take up this subject? Have we not a large school fund, and an excellent school system? This business belongs to the government, not to individuals."

By such remarks, they have always reminded me of the boy, who was indentured in the old-fashioned way: to work nine months in the year, and receive an education the remaining three months. But the boy could never be induced to attend the school, and the neighbors said to him,—"Why do you not go to school, as other boys do?" To which the boy observed: "My master has agreed, in the 'denture, to give me an education, and he is bound to do it; and I am not going to the school house after it."

Now, some of us seem to think that the school fund and the school law "are bound to give us an education," and we are not to make any effort ourselves for it.

But a school law is not education—a school fund is not education. *Individual sacrifice and effort* is the price of knowledge; and relying upon any thing else, prevents the school fund from aiding us.

LABOR, BUT NO REWARD.

1. Neglecting the Common School in the District, is like the farmer, who takes all the stones from the field, encloses it with a good strong fence, ploughs it mellow and light, plasters and manures it richly, and then omits to sow seed in it: but lets the weeds occupy the field.

2. The District goes to the expense of building a school house,—of purchasing school books,—of feeding and clothing the children; but so uniformly does it neglect the teacher and the school, that there is no harvest, or one only of immoral weeds.

A FIGURE.

1. If forty individuals were in a ship, at sea, and but one of them had a knowledge of navigation, the lives, the fortunes, the hopes of all on board would be in the hands

of this one man of knowledge. If he were really a learned, honest man, he would conduct them with skill and safety.

2. The teacher is in a vessel, (the School House) with forty, young and ignorant; and he may shipwreck them all, or he may skilfully direct their course through the paths of knowledge, into the haven of virtue and happiness. All is dependent on the teacher—the Pilot on angry waters in a fearful night.

TRUE EDUCATION.

1. But it is not to knowledge alone that education must be directed. *Action* and *being* are the most important points, and knowledge is only valuable as far as it contributes to make them perfect.

2. It is little if a man be an encyclopædia of knowledge, if he is unable to take his rank as a moral and social being. Precept and the science of morals, no doubt, will enable him intellectually to judge between action; but many know, who cannot act: this is not enough.

3. Unless education has operated upon the desires and habits—unless it has accustomed the individual to seek his pleasure from things which afford it of the highest, and most enduring description—unless it has awakened the sympathies, and taught him to take a deep interest in the well-being of his fellows—unless, in a country wealthy as this is, it has made the possessor of it desirous and capable of applying it to reasonable and noble purposes—it has done little to make him wiser and happier; and if it has not these effects, where is its utility?

POOR TEACHERS—POOR PAY.

1. We have given teachers poor pay, because they have been poor teachers. School Districts have rewarded on the same principle that the Indian did, who, after the sermon, put a penny into the hat, but was asked why he did not put in more; when he laconically said, "Poor preach, poor pay." The system in the United States has been, "poor teaching poor paying."

2. Teachers complain of low wages, but they usually get as much as they are worth. The avarice or indifference of parents, and the inability of teachers, are about equally culpable. It was a remark of Franklin, "that if we build pigeon holes, the pigeons will come;" and I would say to teachers, if you will prepare yourselves for extra wages, extra wages will come.

3. We pay men in proportion to the time and money they have expended in preparing themselves for their calling. The great mass of teachers have never spent either time or money in preparing to teach, and they cannot expect to receive better pay than the mere muscular laborer. They must not look for an increase of wages, until they increase their knowledge.

4. The teacher's best method of making parents more liberal, is to make himself entitled to this liberality. I believe that parents generally, are disposed to reward teaching just in proportion to its excellence. At any rate, teachers cannot expect better pay, while they remain unqualified. Let them qualify themselves, and then if parents do not offer an adequate reward, the teachers will have a right to complain of inadequate compensation.

FROM MAINE.

1. We have received Mr. Carpenter's Address on Education—delivered before the "Penobscot Association of Teachers." This is a valuable document, and we ask attention to a few of the resolutions passed by the above "Association."

2. "*Resolved*, That our District Schools are the peculiar seminaries of the *poor*, and that it is the duty of *every one* to do all he can to support and sustain them.

3. "On motion of Mr. Carpenter,

"*Resolved*, That building a school house should not be an *experiment*, to ascertain how many *human beings* can live in a given space, and with a given quantity of air; and that the time has not yet arrived for making retrenchments in this department of expenditure.

4. "*Resolved*, That in the opinion of this Association, the *public good* and the cause of education, require the establishment of a Board of Education, by the Legislature, to superintend the interests of common schools in this State."

5. This last is an important resolution. Not two years since, Massachusetts appointed the Board; and, through it, and in consequence of it, more has been done in that State for the cause of the people's education, than could possibly have been done in any other way.

6. Every State should, at once, appoint this Board—the chairman of which should travel over the State and lecture—issue a Common School Paper—form associations for the improvement of schools, &c. &c.

PENNSYLVANIA.

1. It appears from the report of Mr. Burrows, the indefatigable and intelligent superintendent of public schools in the above

State, that in the districts reported, there are 3,351 male, and 1,490 female teachers, and that the number of scholars taught was 182,355, increased from 80,000.

2. Of these, 3,612 were Germans, 922 were in endowed schools, and 713 were colored, and the average cost of teaching for a month was about thirty-seven and a half cents. The whole number of persons, between five and fifteen years, in the districts reported, is supposed to be about 200,000.

3. We extract the following judicious and liberal remarks on the subject of the remuneration of teachers:

4. "Persons are now found anxious to undertake the business of instruction in primary schools, who would not do so three years ago. This is owing, mainly, to the increased respectability of the calling. It is in this way that the chief improvement is effected.

5. "The compensation is increasing. It is now $18 89; and four years ago it was not $14 for males.

6. "This is one of the most cheering results of the system. It is in vain to expect well qualified persons to assume an employment, however necessary and useful, unless they are properly compensated. It is equally certain that they will, when they receive a fair remuneration. In the latter event, the supply can soon be made to equal the demand.

7. "There were 4,039 primary schools taught in the districts, that have reported. Of these, eighty-six were German, twenty-two endowed schools, and seventeen colored. The average number of scholars in each was about forty-two; and they were kept open, on an average, six months in the year.

From the District School.

By J. Orville Taylor.

THE LOCATION AND STRUCTURE OF SCHOOL HOUSES.

Many of our district school houses are among the very worst specimens of architecture. The construction of these edifices has received but little attention or aid from the more intelligent part of community, and has been left to the care of those who have known or thought of no other model but the old building, and who have studied their pecuniary interest more attentively than the education and comforts of their children. I know of nothing among us that brings so great a reproach upon our affluence and intelligence as the low, dark, filthy appearance of many of our district school houses. There is no part of the means of education that makes a stronger demand upon the learned and benevolent, and none which requires a more thorough reform, than the location, size, structure and fixtures of the buildings in which nineteen citizens out of twenty receive their first impressions, their first character, and the principal part of their education.

Objects which are constantly before the eye, although they may be inanimate, have a wonderful influence upon the mind. This being acknowledged, the situation of a school house becomes a matter of great importance. But I would ask the reader to think for a moment, of the location of those he may have witnessed. They are frequently standing on a bleak, barren, stony eminence, where the winds and storms have an unbroken, chilling sweep, and the hot rays of the summer's sun one constant burning glare; where there is neither grass nor leaf, but heated, drifting sand, or sharp and flinty rocks. Such is the burning, desolate, dreary situation of many. Others are placed on some marshy, refuse piece of land, where the stagnant collections of water, and the noxious vapors poison the atmosphere, and make the situation gloomy and sickly; and others again close by the road's side, where the passing of travellers, and the rattling of carriages, divert and distract the mind.

In addition to these gloomy, uncomfortable, unhealthy situations, and constant interruptions from travellers, there is frequently found close by the school house a blacksmith's shop with its incessant pounding, and the cooper's shop with its constant "rub-a-dub," or the public inn, with all its noise and bustle; so that if there is not bedlam in the school house, there is all around it. And how unfit the business and company of such places for children! How demoralizing the influence on the scholars, and how offensive and annoying to the teacher!

The structure of school houses is frequently as injurious and unpleasant, as the location. They are often low, and cramped, and miserably ventilated; the room sometimes is filled with smoke, and always with impure air; the seats so high that the scholars are unable to touch their feet to the floor, but must sit bolt upright, without a back-piece, perched between the heavens and the earth; the writing-desk, in front, as high as the eyes of many of the occupants; the seats so arranged that the movement of one disturbs the whole seat, or in such a position that the teacher finds it difficult to get near the pupils; and the win-

dows so scarce, and so small, or so filled up with wooden panes or hats, that but little light can enter, making the whole appearance dismal and painful in the extreme. O how entirely opposite to every thing that should accompany and assist the mental and physical development of children! In this torturing condition, and in this dismal receptacle, which seems to be regarded as a necessary evil, the children are to remain for weeks, and months, and years. Can it be thought strange, that they should rejoice when they are no longer compelled to enter this abode! Who would not "hate instruction!"

I would by no means say, that all school houses are of this description; but I think that every reader has seen many that were attended with some of the inconveniences, if not all, that I have mentioned. I would earnestly request all to notice the construction and location of these houses, when they are travelling through any part of the United States. In the State of New York, and in the New England States, these buildings are superior to those in the other states; but my remarks are applicable to many of the schoolhouses of New England and New York.

But as my desire is not so much to point out defects as to suggest remedies, and to make known well-tested improvements, I will make some remarks upon the proper location, structure, size, fixtures, and appendages of school houses.

And first, the *location*. This should be on a piece of firm ground, at some distance from the road, and where the air has a free circulation. The place should be quiet, and protected from the winds and the rays of the sun by a surrounding grove. The natural scenery around the house should be varied and beautiful; and this is highly important, as all natural objects as well as individuals have an influence in making us cheerful or otherwise, in proportion as they appear pleasing and agreeable. When the parent selects a site for his own dwelling, he does not choose the most worthless corner of his farm, nor a marshy, gloomy spot, but a place that is dry, light, and airy, where the natural scenery is rich and beautiful, and where he will not be incommoded by others. Should he not be equally solicitous for the comfort, health, and happiness of his children, by selecting a pleasant situation where they are to be educated!

A child is educated by other teachers than books and schoolmasters. Every object that he sees, whether animate or inanimate, teaches him; every flower, and plant, and shrub, and tree, "lessons of heavenly wisdom teach;" and every running brook, and singing bird, are teachers; the air, and the earth, and the ocean teach; and where they are the most eloquent, parents should place the infant mind. There is a difference in nature's teachers, and parents may choose the wisest and the most winning for their children's tutors. Then, let a lovely, delightful spot be selected for the school house, let every thing around it be comfortable and cheerful. Let the school be removed from the noise and sight of business, and from every thing that would endanger the body or divert the mind.

There are some districts which are not privileged with such locations; and the parents in these must choose the best spot they have. But how often have I seen a school house standing in the very worst place in the whole district, because that spot happened to be central, according to the surveyor's chain, when, within fifty or a hundred rods, a shady, quiet retreat, a delightful place for a school, might have been chosen.

The average number of children who are fit subjects for the school, in the districts of New York, is about seventy. To accommodate this number, the school house should be one story and a half high, forty feet long, and thirty in breadth. This height will admit of a high ceiling, which is of great importance in a room that is filled. The walls should be overlaid with boards, as high as the heads of the scholars, and the remaining part of the wall and the ceiling kept pure and bright with whitewash. The floor should be level, having an elevation opposite the door for the teacher. The stove should stand near the door, to let the current of air which rushes in drive that which is near the stove and heated to the distant parts of the room. There should be two entrance doors, an inner and an outer one. The outer one opening into an entry or hall, of sufficient size for the scholars to place their hats, cloaks, and bonnets. The inner door, opposite the outer one, and opening from the hall into the school room.

There should be three windows in each side of the room, and two in the end opposite the door and hall. The lower part of the windows should be at least five feet from the floor; and the upper sash should be lowered when air is admitted, instead of raising the under one. Windows of this height from the floor, and of this construction, have many advantages. They prevent the scholars from looking out; and being farther from their reach, are less liable to injury. The scholars will not be so much exposed to the air when they are *lowered*,

and they will permit the impure air which rises towards the ceiling to escape. The windows should have blinds on the outside, and curtains on the inside.

The desks should be so constructed, that when one moves, he need not disturb the others; and so arranged that the teacher may see all the scholars in the face, and have easy access to any one of them. The benches should vary in height, so that they may suit scholars of different sizes. The height should always be such that the scholar may rest his feet upon the floor. The edge of the desk, next to the scholar, should be directly over the edge of the seat. The distance between the surface of the seat and the surface of the desk, should vary at least twelve inches among the different desks of the school, that they may be appropriate for large and small scholars. The upper surface of the desk should be nearly horizontal, and about three inches higher than the occupant's elbow when the arm is distended. In many school houses, the surface of the desk is so oblique, that the pupils find it difficult to keep their books and slates upon them. Others are so low that the scholars almost lie down upon them, and in this way remain in a very unhealthy posture. *The body should be kept erect, and the limbs as nearly as possible in a natural position.* If the desk is high, the arm and shoulder must be raised, and the wrist bent, and this will soon occasion pain, and distort the body. How often are the lungs diseased, and the digestive organs deranged, by too low desks! And, on the other hand, how many distorted and deformed bodies, from having the writing arm raised up too high! Teachers should be careful that every scholar has a suitable seat and desk.

School houses are poorly ventilated. The breathing of each individual in the room, destroys nearly a gallon of air every minute; and the effluvia that is constantly escaping from the body, passes into the air of the room. From these two causes, the air in the room soon loses its vital principle, and becomes loaded with disease. Breathing this polluted atmosphere, produces the pale faces and meagre forms we so often see among scholars. It is this infected atmosphere that makes the teacher's employment so unhealthy. It is the poisonous state of the air that occasions the drowsiness and stupor among the scholars. It is the impure air that produces languor, loss of appetite, and disease in the lungs. It is a wonder that scholars preserve either health or activity. How many have lost their health, and destroyed their constitution, by endeavoring to improve the mind, but neglected the body! Let teachers, then, see that their school rooms are well ventilated, and that their scholars take proper exercise in the open air.

Attached to every school house should be a play-ground for the scholars. This will keep them from the dangers of the highway, and from the cultivated fields in the vicinity. This ground should be free from every thing that might injure the scholars. Every school house, likewise, should have an out-building, for preserving the wood from the weather. This building will seldom be filled, and will serve to protect the scholars from the storms, during the moments of recreation.

There should be a good spring of water, or a pump, near the school house. This convenience is not sufficiently attended to. The scholars are obliged to disturb and injure the property of the nearest neighbor, and sometimes to go a great distance whenever they wish to drink. A watering place should be provided for the school at a proper distance, and kept in such a condition, that the younger scholars may obtain drink without difficulty or danger.

VALUE OF EDUCATION TO FARMERS.

Our farmers should cultivate their minds and their hearts, as well as their fields.—They can gain as rich rewards in the mental, as they can reap profitable harvests in the natural world. Without learning, a man cannot be a first-rate farmer. Without intelligence, he cannot discharge in a proper manner the duties of a citizen. Agriculture is a science that requires experience and study. Men must be educated to be farmers, as well as to be lawyers or doctors. And there are thousands of young men who are in stores and offices, who should go into agricultural pursuits. It would be better for them, better for the country. And who would not rather be an independent farmer, than a small shopkeeper, or a fourth-rate lawyer or doctor? Who would not rather be first in a useful employment, than to be titman in one which the world calls honorable! Let young men seek land, rather than situations "in the cotton trade and sugar line."

No avocation in life is more respectable and useful than that of the farmer. The time has gone by, when "contempt is cast upon the husbandman." Agriculture as a science is becoming more important, and more honorable. It is the noblest, for it is "the natural employment of man."

Buckeye Ploughboy.

S. MEDARY, STATE PRINTER.